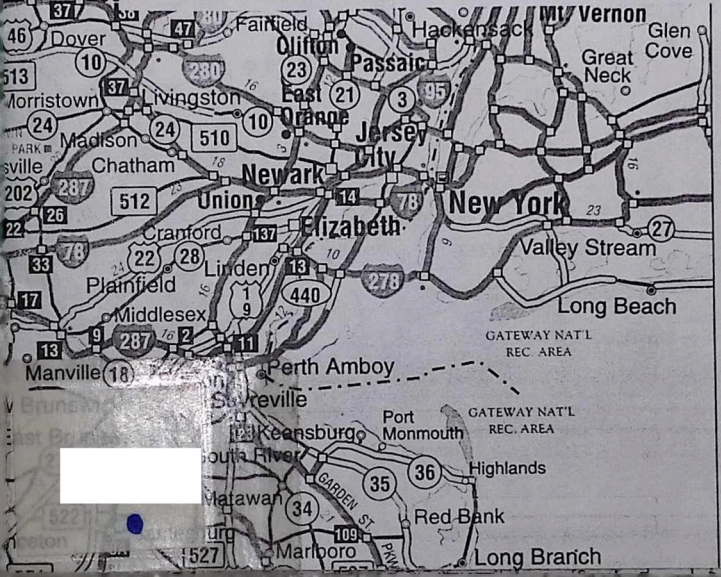
whatever saves

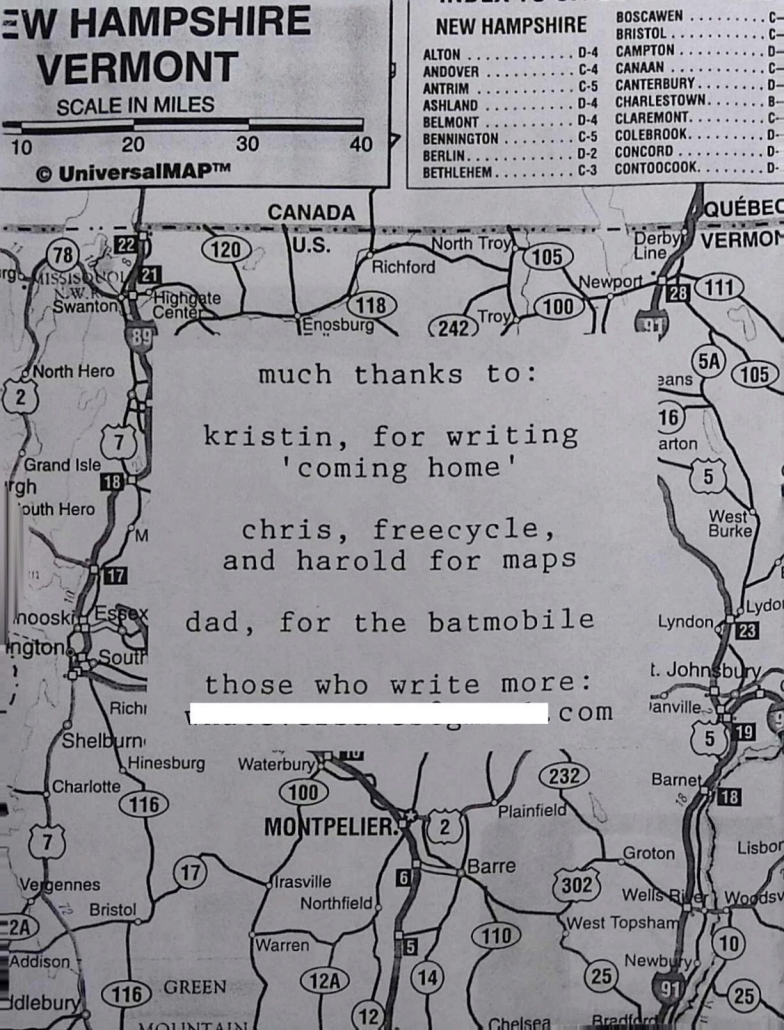
volume four: places

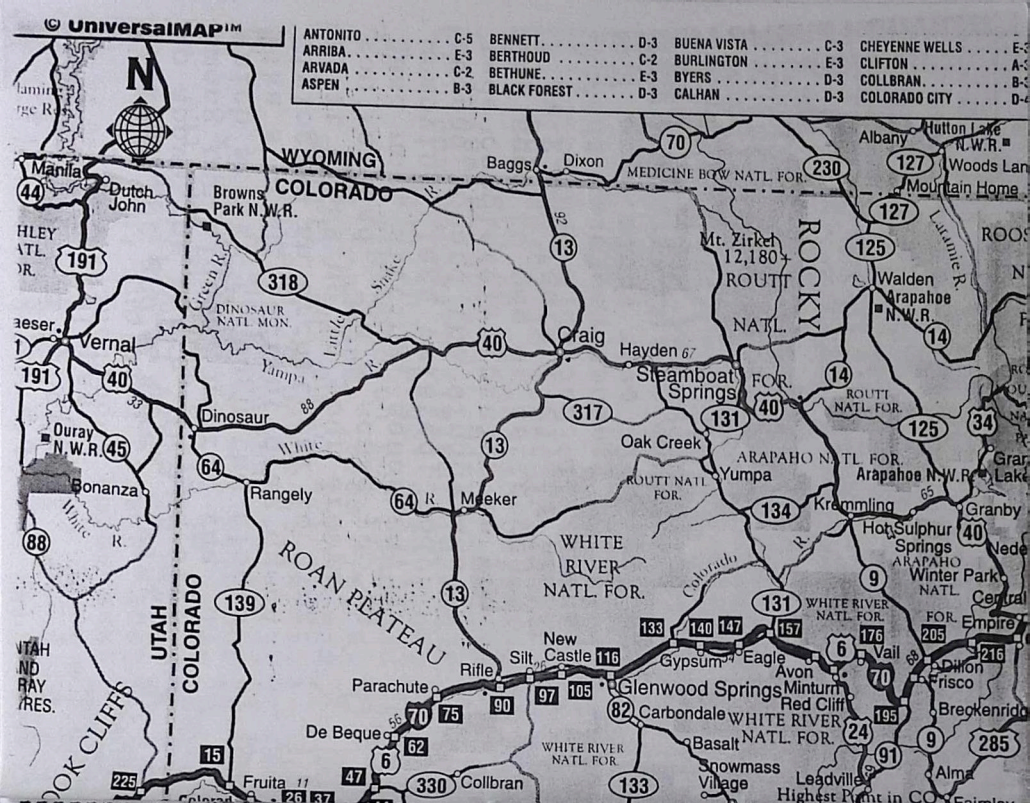
bein

fall 2007

assembled and mostly written
by megan

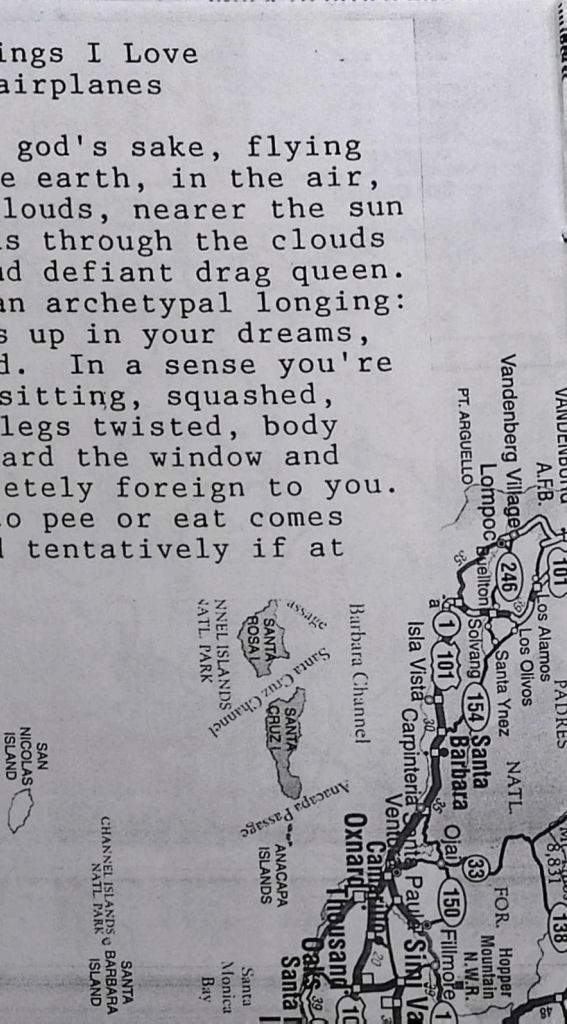



EW HAMPSHIRE
VERMONT
SCALE IN MILES
10 20 30 40
© UniversalMAP™
NEW HAMPSHIRE
ALTON D-4
ANDOVER C-4
ANTRIM C-5
ASHLAND D-4
BELMONT D-4
BENNINGTON C-5
BERLIN D-2
BETHLEHEM C-3
BOSCAWEN
BRISTOL C-
CAMPTON D-
CANAAN C-
CANTERBURY D-
CHARLESTOWN B-
CLAREMONT C-
COLEBROOK D-
CONCORD D-
CONTOOCOOK D-
CANADA
U.S.
QUÉBEC
VERMON
Swanton
Highgate Center
Enosburg
Richford
North Troy
Troy
Newport
Derby Line
North Hero
Grand Isle
South Hero
Essex
Shelburne
Hinesburg
Charlotte
Vergennes
Bristol
Addison
Middlebury
Waterbury
MONTPELIER
Barre
Plainfield
Irasville
Northfield
Warren
GREEN
MOUNTAIN
Chelsea
West Burke
Lyndon
St. Johnsbury
Barnet
Groton
West Topsham
Newbury
Wells River
Woodsv
Lisbon
much thanks to:
kristin, for writing 'coming home'
chris, freecycle, and harold for maps
dad, for the batmobile
those who write more:
[redacted] com

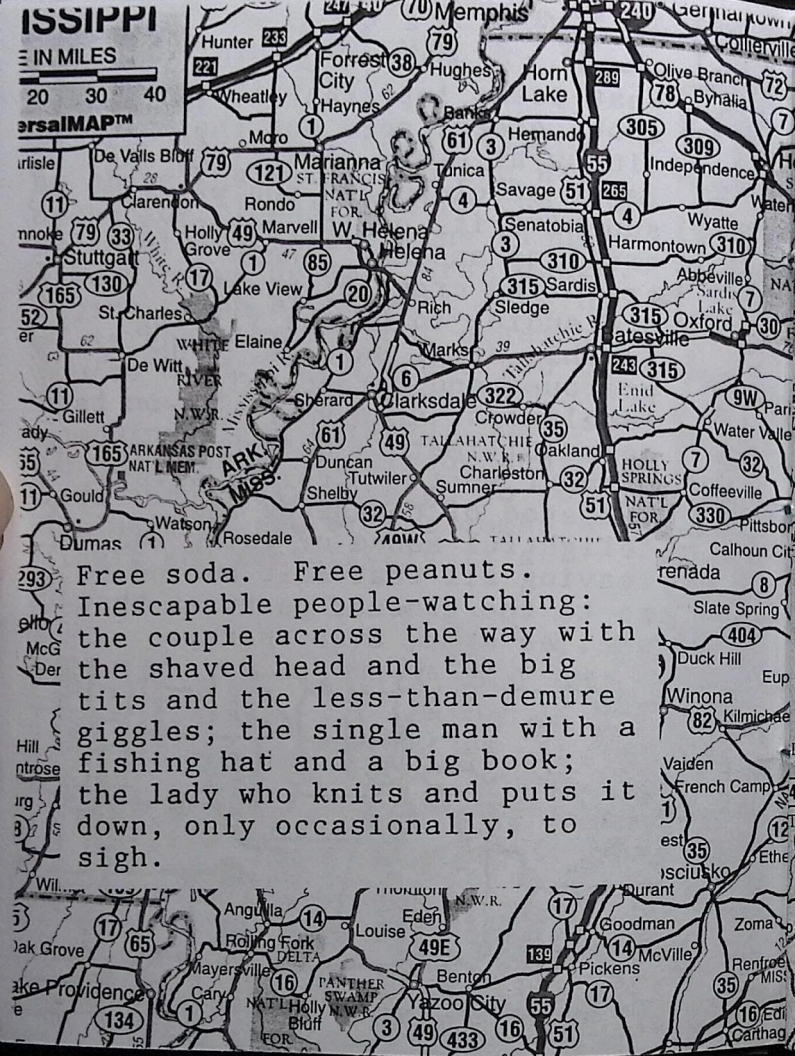

© UniversalMAP™
ANTONITO C-5
ARRIBA E-3
ARVADA C-2
ASPEN B-3
BENNETT D-3
BERTHOUD C-2
BETHUNE E-3
BLACK FOREST D-3
BUENA VISTA C-3
BURLINGTON E-3
BYERS D-3
CALHAN D-3
CHEYENNE WELLS E-3
CLIFTON A-3
COLLBRAN B-3
COLORADO CITY D-3
N
WYOMING
COLORADO
UTAH
Manila
Dutch John
Browns Park N.W.R.
Baggs
Dixon
MEDICINE BOW NATL. FOR.
Albany
Hutton Lake N.W.R.
Woods Landing
Mountain Home
Mt. Zirkel 12,180
ROUTT NATL. FOR.
ROCKY
Walden
Arapahoe N.W.R.
Laramie R.
Green R.
DINOSAUR NATL. MON.
Little Snake R.
Yampa R.
Vernal
Craig
Hayden
Steamboat Springs
ROUTT NATL. FOR.
Ouray N.W.R.
Dinosaur
White R.
Oak Creek
Yumpa
ARAPAHO NATL. FOR.
Arapahoe N.W.R.
Bonanza
Rangely
Meeker
ROUTT NATL. FOR.
Kremmling
Granby
Hot Sulphur Springs
ARAPAHO NATL. FOR.
Winter Park
Central
WHITE RIVER NATL. FOR.
ROAN PLATEAU
Colorado R.
WHITE RIVER NATL. FOR.
Empire
Dillon
Frisco
New Castle
Silt
Rifle
Parachute
Gypsum
Eagle
Avon
Vail
Minturn
Red Cliff
Glenwood Springs
Carbondale
WHITE RIVER NATL. FOR.
Breckenridge
De Beque
Basalt
Snowmass Village
Leadville
Highest Point in CO
Alma
Fruita
Collbran
BOOK CLIFFS
UTAH
COLORADO

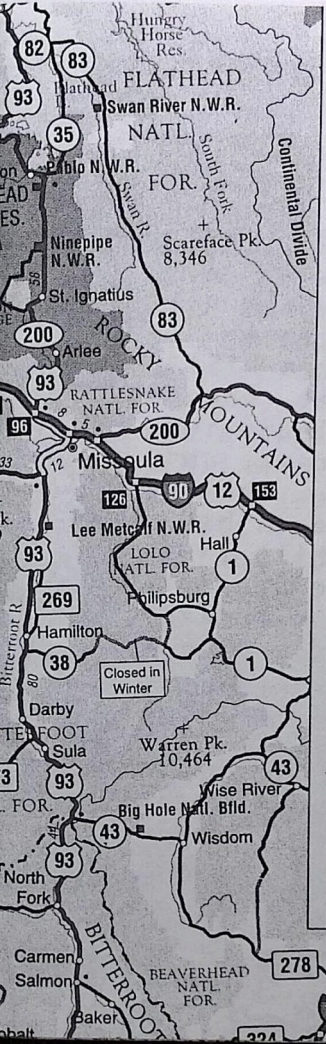
Things I Love
airplanes

Flying, for god's sake, flying up above the earth, in the air, among the clouds, nearer the sun which stalks through the clouds like a proud defiant drag queen. Flying as an archetypal longing: if it shows up in your dreams, you're dead. In a sense you're dead now, sitting, squashed, unmoving, legs twisted, body turned toward the window and made completely foreign to you. The need to pee or eat comes slowly and tentatively if at all.



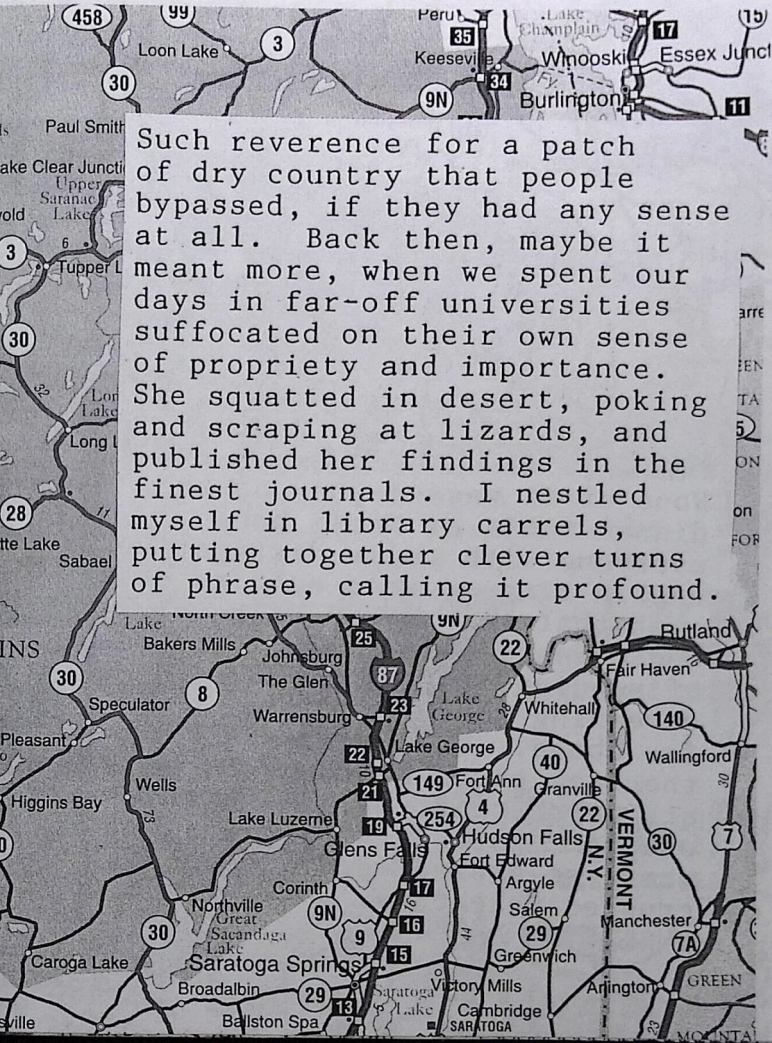
What seems important is to look, stare, pore out the window at every tendril or layer of cloud and the way the sun hits it, or the jet-pack trail of another lonely traveling crowd of people pretending to be the filling in this metal sausage. The profound and untouchable loneliness, when your life seems ultimately detached and without worth. Crying, always. Tempered of course by the delightful sense of going and leaving all that shit behind to go to the greener pastures that are, as ever, over there.


ISSIPPI
E IN MILES
20 30 40
ersalMAP™
Memphis
Hunter
Forrest City
Hughes
Horn Lake
Olive Branch
Byhalia
Wheatley
Haynes
Banks
Hernando
Moro
De Valls Bluff
Marianna
ST. FRANCIS NAT'L FOR.
Tonica
Independence
Clarendon
Rondo
Marvell
W. Helena
Helena
Savage
Senatobia
Wyatte
Holly Grove
Harmontown
Stuttgart
Lake View
Rich
Sardis
Sledge
Abbeville
St. Charles
Elaine
Oxford
Marks
Batesville
De Witt
Sherard
Clarksdale
Crowder
Enid Lake
Gillett
N.W.R.
Water Valley
ARKANSAS POST NAT'L MEM.
Duncan
Tutwiler
Oakland
Charleston
HOLLY SPRINGS
Gould
Shelby
Sumner
Coffeeville
Watson
Rosedale
Pittsboro
Calhoun City
Free soda. Free peanuts.
Inescapable people-watching:
the couple across the way with
the shaved head and the big
tits and the less-than-demure
giggles; the single man with a
fishing hat and a big book;
the lady who knits and puts it
down, only occasionally, to
sigh.
Slate Spring
Duck Hill
Winona
Kilmichael
Vaiden
French Camp
Durant
Anguilla
Eden
Louise
Goodman
Zoma
Rolling Fork
DELTA
Mayersville
Pickens
McVille
Renfroe
Providence
Cary
PANTHER SWAMP N.W.R.
Benton
Holly Bluff
Yazoo City
Edi
Carthag



BLISS	B-6	HOLLISTER	C-6	RED RIV	
BOISE	B-5	HORSESHOE BEND	B-5	REXBUR	
BONE	E-5	HOT SPRINGS	B-6	REYNOL	
BONNERS FERRY	B-1	HOWE	D-5	RICHFIE	
BOVILL	B-2	IDAHO CITY	B-5	RIDDLE	
BRUNEAU	B-6	IDAHO FALLS	D-5	RIGBY	
BUHL	B-6	IONA	D-5	RIGGINS	
BUIST	D-6	ISLAND PARK	E-4	RIRIE	
BURGDORF	B-4	JEROME	C-6	ROBERT	
BURLEY	C-6	KAMIAH	B-3	ROCKFO	
CALDER	B-2	KELLOGG	B-2	ROCKLA	
CALDWELL	A-5	KENDRICK	A-3	ROGERS	
CAMBRIDGE	A-4	KETCHUM	C-5	ROSEWI	
CAREY	C-5	KILGORE	D-4	ROY	
CARMEN	C-4	KING HILL	B-5	RUPERT	
CASCADE	B-4	KOOSKIA	B-3	ST. ANTI	
CASTLEFORD	B-6	KOOTENAI	B-1	SAINT M	
CHALLIS	C-4	KUNA	A-5	SALMON	
CHESTERFIELD	D-6	LAKEVIEW	B-2	SANDPO	
CHUBBUCK	D-6	LEADORE	C-4	SANTA	
CLARK FORK	B-1	LEMHI	C-4	SHELLE	
CLARKIA	B-2	LEWISTON	A-3	SHOSHO	
CLAYTON	C-5	LOST RIVER	C-5	SHOUP	
COBALT	C-4	LOWELL	B-3	SILVER	
COEUR D'ALENE	A-2	LOWMAN	B-5	SMITHS	
CONDA	E-6	LUCILE	B-3	SODA SI	
COOLIN	A-1	MACKAY	C-5	SPENCE	
COTTONWOOD	A-3	MALAD CITY	D-6	SPIRIT L	
COUNCIL	A-4	MALTA	D-6	SPRINGI	
CRAIGMONT	A-3	MARSING	A-5	STANLEY	
CUPRUM	A-4	MAY	C-4	SUGAR	
DEARY	A-3	MAYFIELD	B-5	SUN VAL	
DECLO	C-6	MCCALL	B-4	SUNBEA	
DIETRICH	C-6	MCCAMMON	D-6	SWAN V	
DIXIE	B-4	MELBA	A-5	SWANLA	
DONNELLY	B-4	MIDVALE	A-4	TENDOY	
DOWNEY	D-6	MINIDOKA	C-6	TETONIA	
DUBOIS	D-5	MONTEVIEW	D-5	THATCH	
EASTPORT	B-1	MONTPELIER	E-6	THREE C	
EDEN	C-6	MOORE	D-5	TWIN FA	
ELK CITY	B-3	MOSCOW	A-2	UCON	
ELK RIVER	B-2	MOUNTAIN HOME	B-5	VICTOR	
ELLIS	C-4	MOYIE SPRINGS	B-1	VIRGINI	
ELMIRA	B-1	MUD LAKE	D-5	WAHA	
EMMETT	A-5	MURPHY	A-5	WALLAC	
FAIRFIELD	C-5	MURTAUGH	C-6	WARM L	
FEATHERVILLE	B-5	NAMPA	A-5	WARM F	
FENN	B-3	NEW MEADOWS	B-4	WARREN	
FILER	C-6	NEZPERCE	B-3	WAYAN	
FORT HALL	D-5	NORDMAN	A-1	WEIPPE	
FRANKLIN	D-6	NORTH FORK	C-4	WEISER	
FRUITLAND	A-5	OAKLEY	C-6	WHITE B	
GANNETT	C-5	OLA	B-5	WINCHE	
GARDEN CITY	B-5	ORCHARD	B-5	WORLEY	
GARDEN VALLEY	B-5	OREANA	A-5	YELLOW	

Kristin and I always talk about it like a religious moment: coming over the hill, the sky lightens a bit, the sun breaks through the clouds in carefully portioned rays, and all is suddenly well. The reality is, of course, a bit less dramatic. The hill is a series of curves, the sun is usually long below the horizon, and you push that pedal a little closer to the floor because you're almost there. OK, you're almost to Ontario, Oregon, home of head shops and porn outlets. It's almost like the state line.

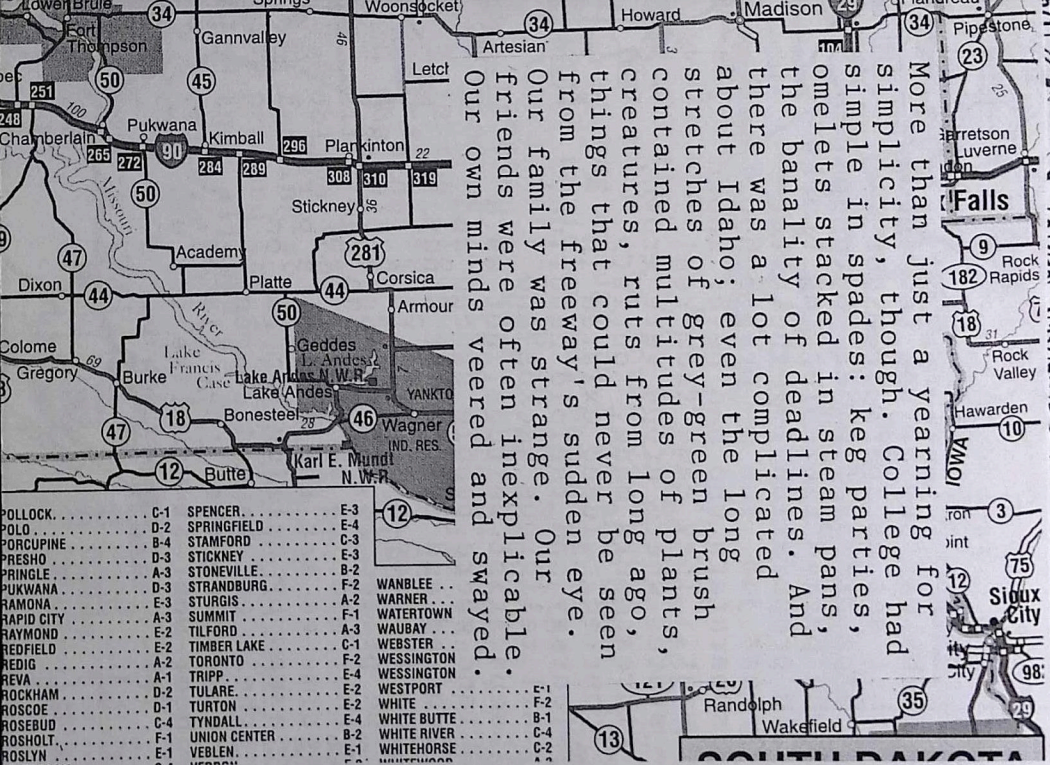


Such reverence for a patch of dry country that people bypassed, if they had any sense at all. Back then, maybe it meant more, when we spent our days in far-off universities suffocated on their own sense of propriety and importance. She squatted in desert, poking and scraping at lizards, and published her findings in the finest journals. I nestled myself in library carrels, putting together clever turns of phrase, calling it profound.

None of it was as easy as the dinner table at Mom's house, everyone with their distinctive napkin ring so we'd have to do wash that less often. The bunk beds creaky with the memories of sending stuffed animals careening to their deaths from far above. The picnic table on the back porch that was part art perch, part philosophizing soapbox, part gathering place where we smoked weed from half-crushed Coke cans.

More than just a yearning for simplicity, though. College had simple in spades: keg parties, omelets stacked in steam pans, the banality of deadlines. And there was a lot complicated about Idaho; even the long stretches of grey-green brush contained multitudes of plants, creatures, ruts from long ago, things that could never be seen from the freeway's sudden eye.

Our family was strange. Our friends were often inexplicable. Our own minds veered and swayed.

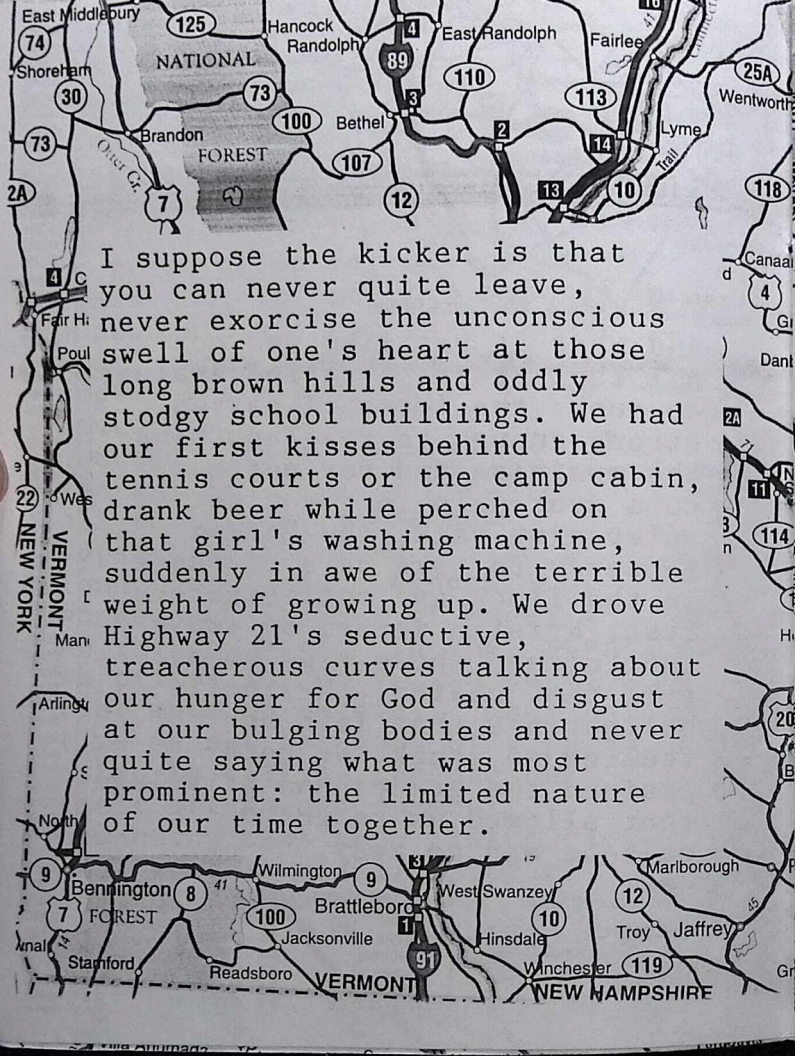


Idaho was one of the few things that set us apart from our compatriots, for her Montanans who parked their logging trucks in preparation for the after-class job, for me prep-school superstars who had never known want. They came from real states where crops were grown, investments made, tourists courted. Idaho existed in fantasy and tabloid headline, all religious wackos and separatist weirdos, not as a land where people danced and worked and stopped at Wendy's on the way home. In that sense we prized it, as you do anything that made us special. Many a time we set the mood of a party askew by calling someone on their off-handed comment, demanding that they listen, to hear what it was like for us.

And what it was like was not all that great. I railed against so much: the force of hatred strong enough to rise and beat the musician and her partner to a near-pulp in the midst of an evening walk, the Mormon tendency to take care of those in the flock and ostracise the rest. Kristin itched to leave the friends whose ties bound till they chafed, the family obligations that left her feeling so stuck. We both praised the grades and privilege that allowed us to go to college and go away.

INDEX TO CITIES AND TOWNS

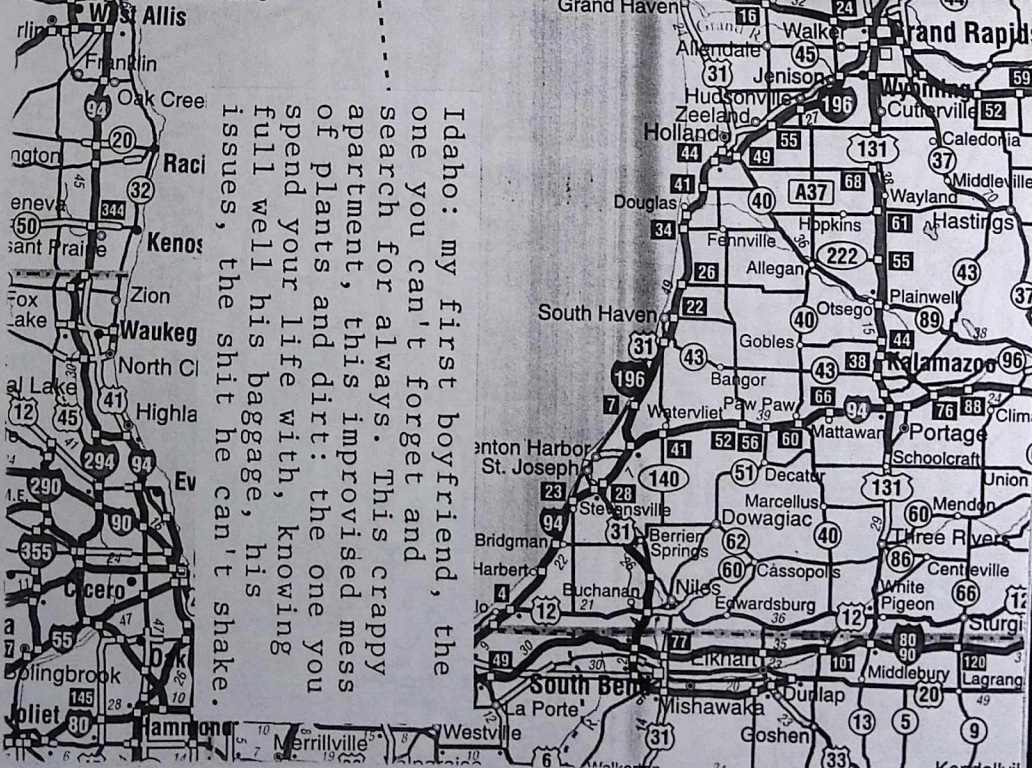
ABSECON C-5
ALLENTOWN. C-3
ALLOWAY A-5
ANDOVER C-2
ASBURY PARK D-3
BRIDGETON A-5
BRIGANTINE. C-5
BROWNS MILLS C-4
BUENA B-5
BURLINGTON B-4



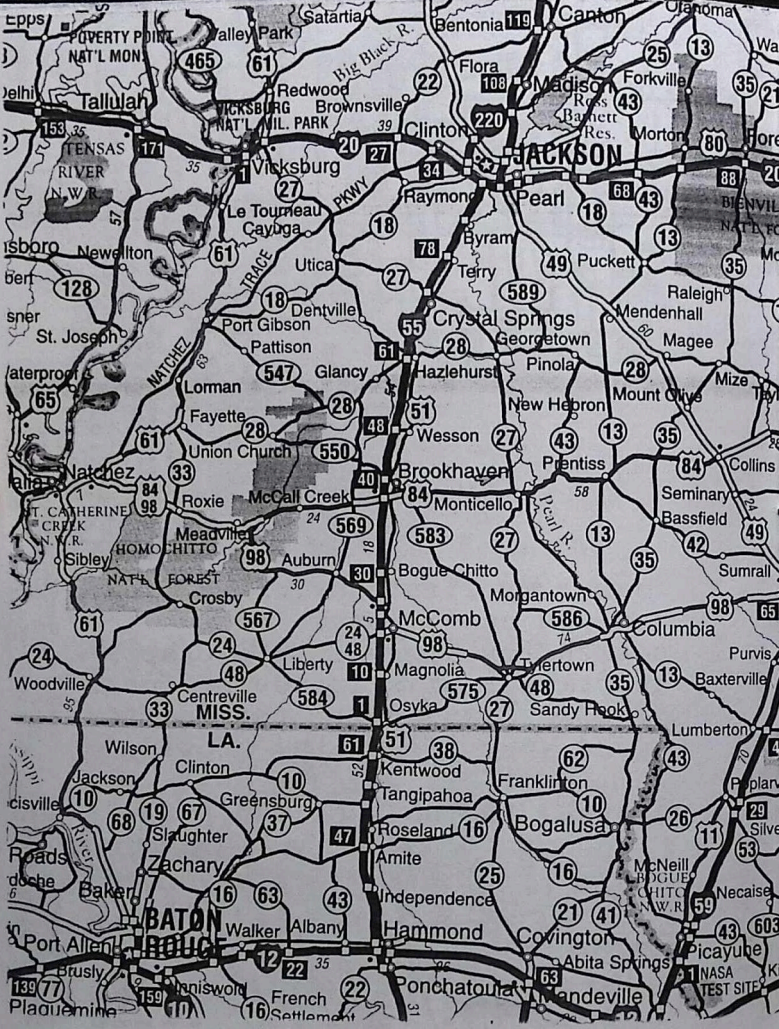
I suppose the kicker is that you can never quite leave, never exorcise the unconscious swell of one's heart at those long brown hills and oddly stodgy school buildings. We had our first kisses behind the tennis courts or the camp cabin, drank beer while perched on that girl's washing machine, suddenly in awe of the terrible weight of growing up. We drove Highway 21's seductive, treacherous curves talking about our hunger for God and disgust at our bulging bodies and never quite saying what was most prominent: the limited nature of our time together.

We learned to be our own faulty, fabulous selves in Idaho and it necessarily embedded itself in us without our ever asking for it. So we sigh majestically at the sight of sagebrush and remind ourselves that yes, we could live in Idaho if we had to. And some days we stare red-eyed at photographs and postcards and yearn so dangerously to be back and consumed by the landscape and the sweet swell of knowing where we are.

That is a nostalgic kind of
want, an ache that burns in
your gut and will never truly
be fulfilled. These days I live
in a place where I am suddenly
blankly and guilelessly in awe
of the little cheapo yard in
front of me. I curl on my trash-
picked chair and gaze at my
sickening eggplant, the gleaming
green groundcover of the
gardening wizard next door, the
trash pile across the way. The
birds chirp over here, the cars
rush over there, and Howlin'
Wolf sounds his tune from the
speakers upstairs. I never, ever
want to leave.



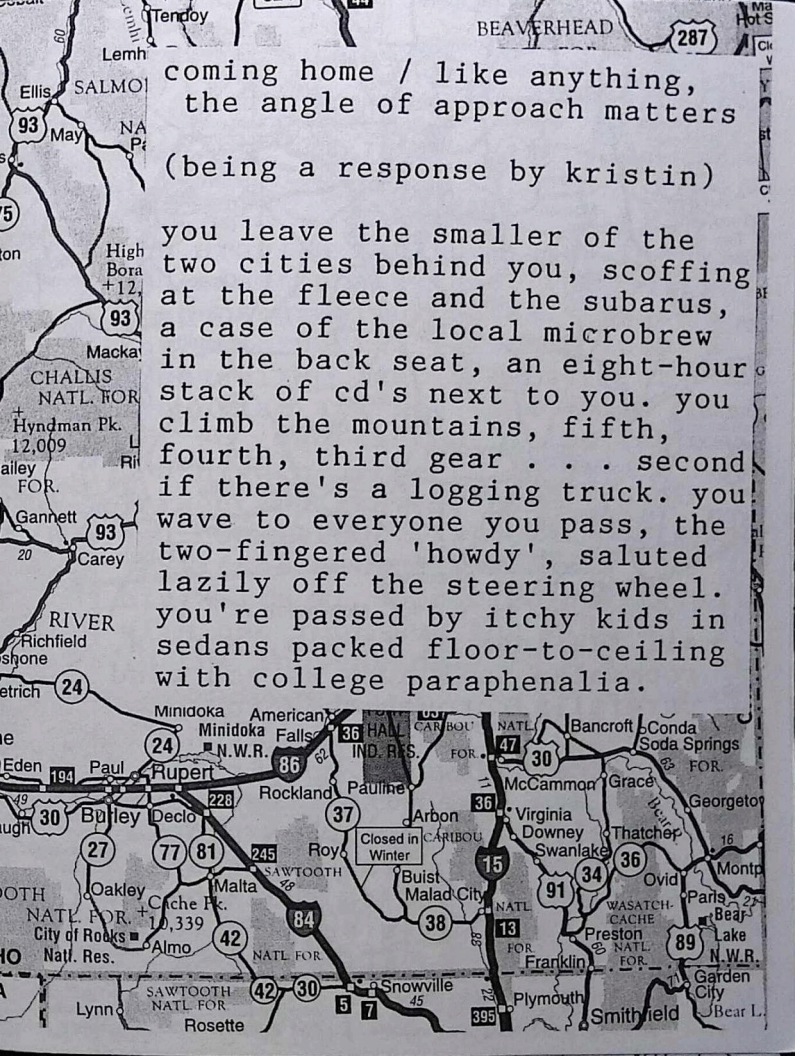
Idaho: my first boyfriend, the one you can't forget and search for always. This crappy apartment, this improvised mess of plants and dirt: the one you spend your life with, knowing full well his baggage, his issues, the shit he can't shake.

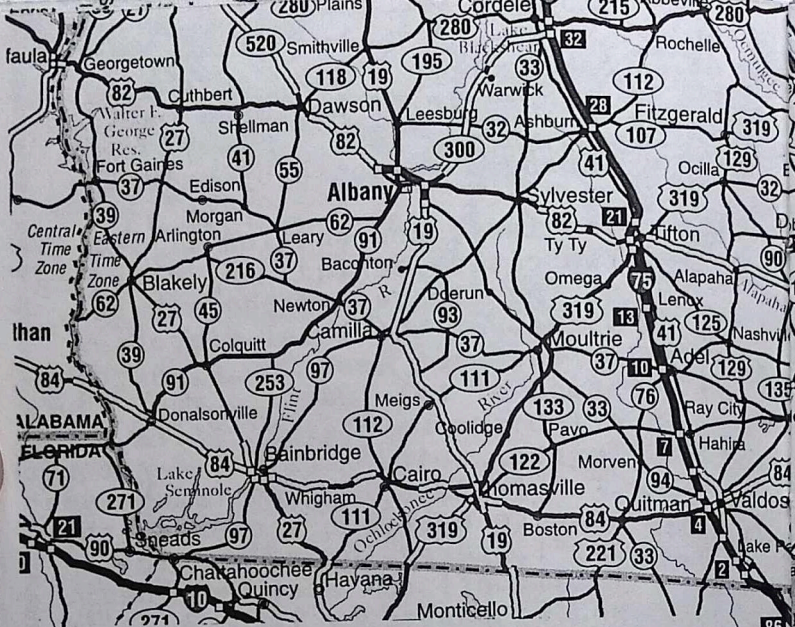

POVERTY POINT NAT'L MON.
Tallulah
VICKSBURG NAT'L MIL. PARK
TENSAS RIVER N.W.R.
Vicksburg
Le Tourneau
Cayuga
Newellton
Utica
Dentville
Port Gibson
Pattison
Glancy
Lorman
Fayette
Union Church
Natchez
Roxie
McCall Creek
Meadville
HOMOCHITTO NAT'L FOREST
Sibley
Crosby
Auburn
Bogue Chitto
Liberty
Woodville
Centreville
MISS.
LA.
Wilson
Clinton
Jackson
Greensburg
Slaughter
Zachary
Baker
BATON ROUGE
Port Allen
Brusly
Plaquemine
Donaldsonville
French Settlement
Ponchatoula
Hammond
Independence
Amite
Roseland
Tangipahoa
Kentwood
Franklinton
Bogalusa
Covington
Abita Springs
Mandeville
Picayune
NASA TEST SITE
McNeill
Magnolia
Osyka
McComb
Brookhaven
Monticello
Prentiss
Hazlehurst
Crystal Springs
Georgetown
Pinola
Mount Olive
New Hebron
Wesson
Terry
Byram
Raymond
Pearl
Clinton
Brownsville
Redwood
Flora
Bentonia
Satartia
Valley Park
Canton
Madison
Forkville
Ross Barnett Res.
Morton
JACKSON
Puckett
Mendenhall
Magee
Mize
Collins
Seminary
Bassfield
Sumrall
Columbia
Purvis
Baxterville
Lumberton
Sandy Hook
Tylertown
Morgantown
Pearl R.
Big Black R.
Pearl R.
Bienville Nat'l For.
Silver
Necaise
McNeill
Poplar
Port Allen
Brusly
Plaquemine
Donaldsonville
Ponchatoula
Hammond
Independence
Amite
Roseland
Tangipahoa
Kentwood
Franklinton
Bogalusa
Covington
Abita Springs
Mandeville
Picayune
Magnolia
Osyka
McComb
Brookhaven
Monticello
Prentiss
Hazlehurst
Crystal Springs
Georgetown
Pinola
Mount Olive
New Hebron
Wesson
Terry
Byram
Raymond
Pearl
Clinton
Brownsville
Redwood
Flora
Bentonia
Satartia
Valley Park
Canton
Madison
Forkville
Ross Barnett Res.
Morton
JACKSON
Puckett
Mendenhall
Magee
Mize
Collins
Seminary
Bassfield
Sumrall
Columbia
Purvis
Baxterville
Lumberton
Sandy Hook
Tylertown
Morgantown
Pearl R.
Big Black R.
Pearl R.
Bienville Nat'l For.
Silver
Necaise
McNeill
Poplar
Port Allen
Brusly
Plaquemine
Donaldsonville
Ponchatoula
Hammond
Independence
Amite
Roseland
Tangipahoa
Kentwood
Franklinton
Bogalusa
Covington
Abita Springs
Mandeville
Picayune
NASA TEST SITE
McNeill

coming home / like anything,
the angle of approach matters

(being a response by kristin)

you leave the smaller of the
two cities behind you, scoffing
at the fleece and the subarus,
a case of the local microbrew
in the back seat, an eight-hour
stack of cd's next to you. you
climb the mountains, fifth,
fourth, third gear . . . second
if there's a logging truck. you
wave to everyone you pass, the
two-fingered 'howdy', saluted
lazily off the steering wheel.
you're passed by itchy kids in
sedans packed floor-to-ceiling
with college paraphenalia.





all feelings of finals, stress, roommates fall away as you wind carefully through the pines, past the patches you saw burn from the highway a couple of years ago, when the fires were famously bad. [but what people not from 'round these parts don't understand is that that's normal . . . it's summer, things are aflame. so it goes.]

TIES

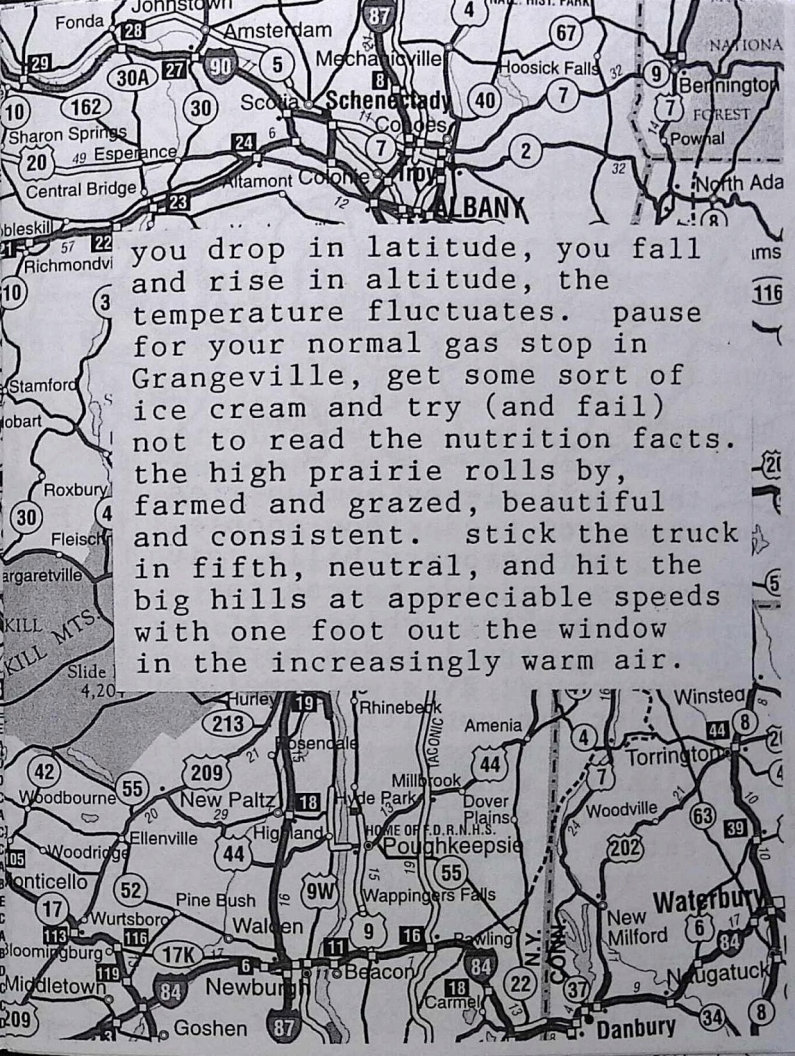
-4 Baxley
-2 Blacks
-5 Blairsv
-3 Blakely
-4 Blue R
-5 Boston
-4 Bowdo
-4 Bowma
-2 Breme
-4 Brookl
-2 Broxton
-4 Brunsw
-4 Buchan
-2 Buena
-2 Buford
-2 Butler
-5 Byron B-3
-5 Cairo B-5
-1 Calhoun A-1

Comer C-2
Commerce C-2
Conyers B-2

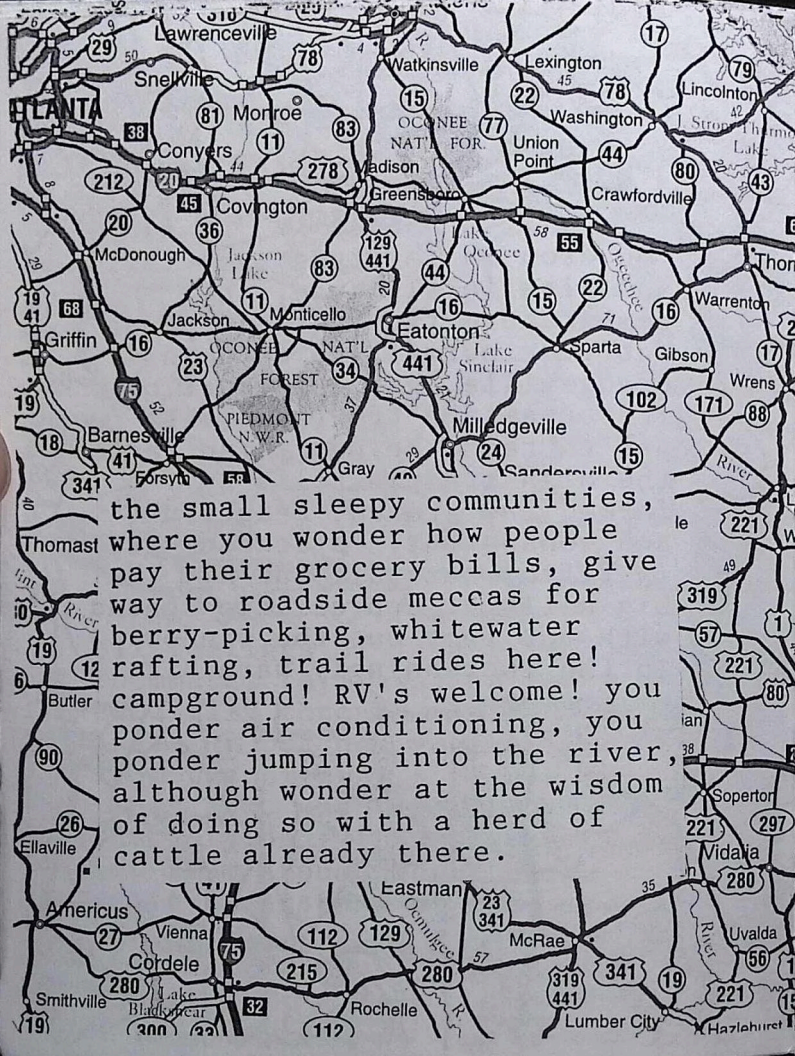
Donalsonville A-5
Douglas C-4
Douglasville A-2

Fort Oglethorpe A-1
Fort Valley B-3
Franklin A-3

Hartwell .....
Hawkinsville .....
Hazlehurst .....



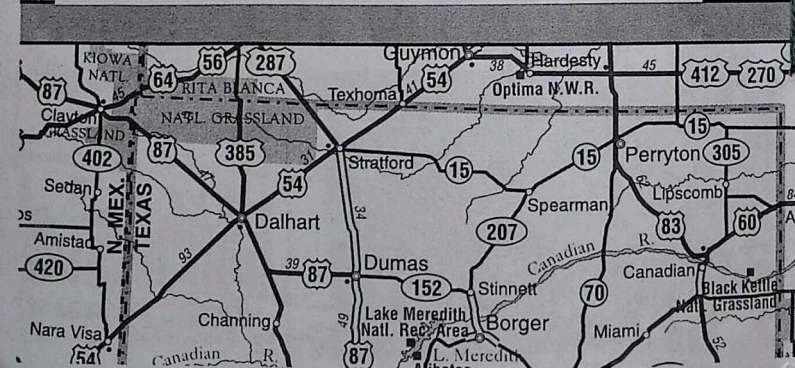
you drop in latitude, you fall and rise in altitude, the temperature fluctuates. pause for your normal gas stop in Grangeville, get some sort of ice cream and try (and fail) not to read the nutrition facts. the high prairie rolls by, farmed and grazed, beautiful and consistent. stick the truck in fifth, neutral, and hit the big hills at appreciable speeds with one foot out the window in the increasingly warm air.



the small sleepy communities, where you wonder how people pay their grocery bills, give way to roadside meccas for berry-picking, whitewater rafting, trail rides here! campground! RV's welcome! you ponder air conditioning, you ponder jumping into the river, although wonder at the wisdom of doing so with a herd of cattle already there.

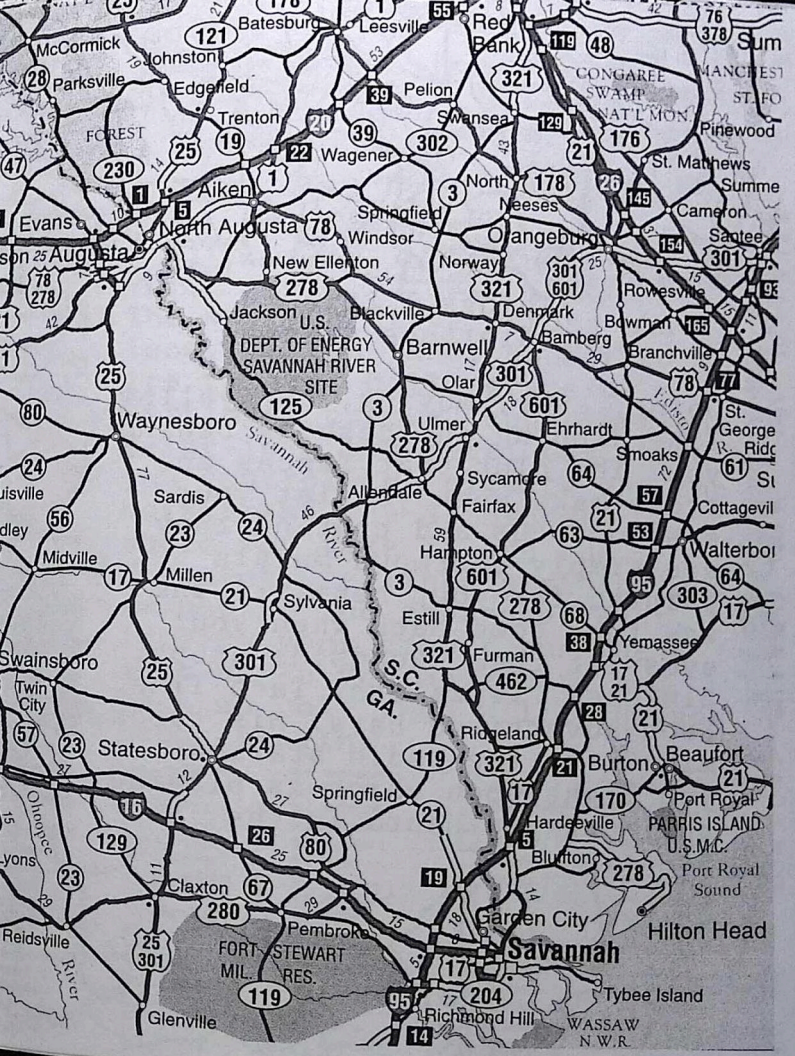
john prine, johnny cash bring you to the ski towns, where the fleece and the subarus return, signs for lattes and cabins for rent. the air continues getting warmer, you're sweating in torrents and you start climbing that last hill. everything's now brown and seems ready to burst into flames. logging trucks are gone, but SUV's carrying boats and jet skis zoom past you while you crawl forward next to battered vintage dodge trucks carrying kids and dogs in the back.

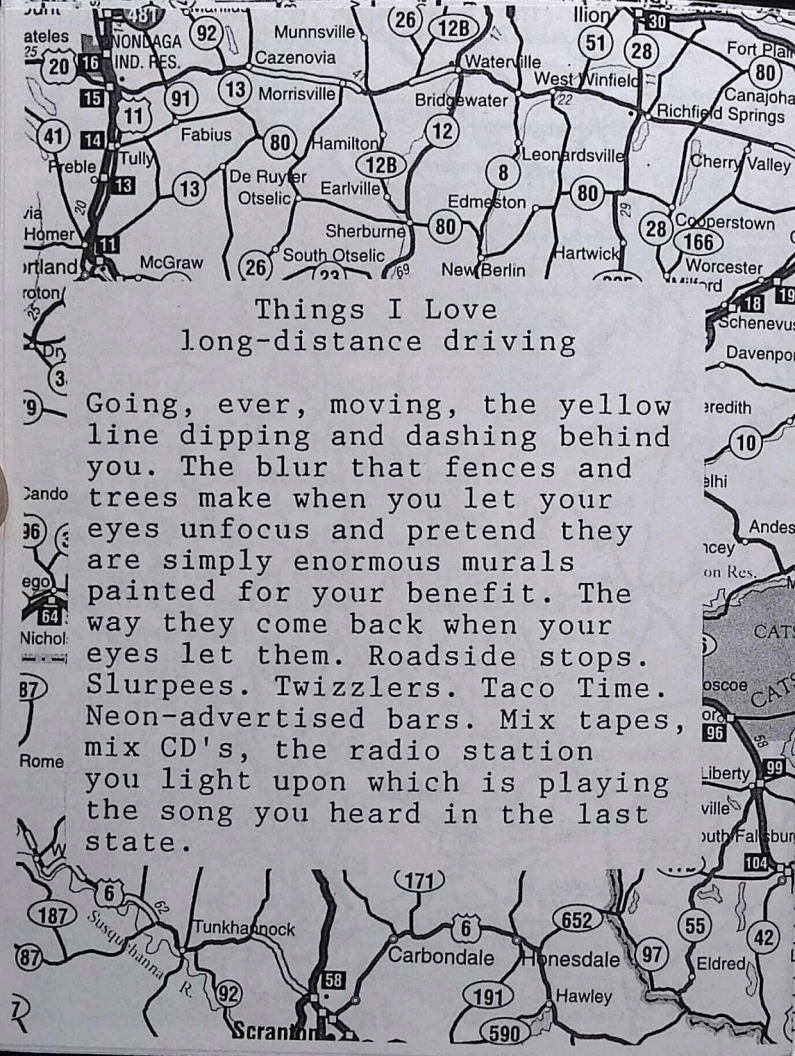
you crest the final hill, throw the truck into neutral and stick your left foot back through the open window, hair blowing as you descend from the brown, sagebrush-covered hills into a valley with slightly dirty air and mountains in the far distance. the edges which you remember as farms, back when you and your dad rode bikes together, are now inappropriately named subdivisions -- quail ridge where there's neither, spring meadow where you're one for two, suggestions of a land far more lush than this one.



the four-for-a-dollar hot dog gas station is to your left and you join the flood of slowly-moving traffic coming into the city, not remembering which way home is faster plus or minus five minutes. you laugh at the serious-looking boys in cars at stoplights, who rev their engines to outrun you, you smile at the things that never change but growl at the increased strip malls, subdivisions, widened big roads.

as you get closer to the familiar, all but the most significant change melts away and you remember moments from maybe not so long ago. the streets are the same, the small restaurants keep changing hands, you duck to avoid being seen by all resident leftovers. and once again you think, god, what a city, i'm so glad not to be here, to be above, to be far away . . . but goddammit, it's good to be home, and if i'm not careful, i could really stay here.


Batesburg
Leesville
Red Bank
McCormick
Johnston
Parksville
Edgefield
Pelion
Swansea
CONGAREE SWAMP NAT'L MON.
Pinewood
FOREST
Trenton
Wagener
St. Matthews
Aiken
North
Neeses
Springfield
Cameron
Evans
North Augusta
Windsor
Orangeburg
Santee
Augusta
New Ellenton
Norway
Rowesville
Jackson
Blackville
Denmark
Bowman
U.S. DEPT. OF ENERGY SAVANNAH RIVER SITE
Barnwell
Bamberg
Branchville
Olar
Waynesboro
Savannah
Ulmer
Ehrhardt
St. George
Smoaks
Sycamore
Allendale
Fairfax
Sardis
Cottageville
Midville
Hampton
Walterboro
Millen
Sylvania
Estill
Yemassee
Swainsboro
Furman
S.C.
GA.
Twin City
Ridgeland
Statesboro
Burton
Beaufort
Springfield
Port Royal
Ohoopee
Hardeeville
PARRIS ISLAND U.S.M.C.
Lyons
Bluffton
Port Royal Sound
Claxton
Garden City
Hilton Head
Reidsville
Pembroke
FORT STEWART MIL. RES.
Savannah
Tybee Island
Glenville
Richmond Hill
WASSAW N.W.R.

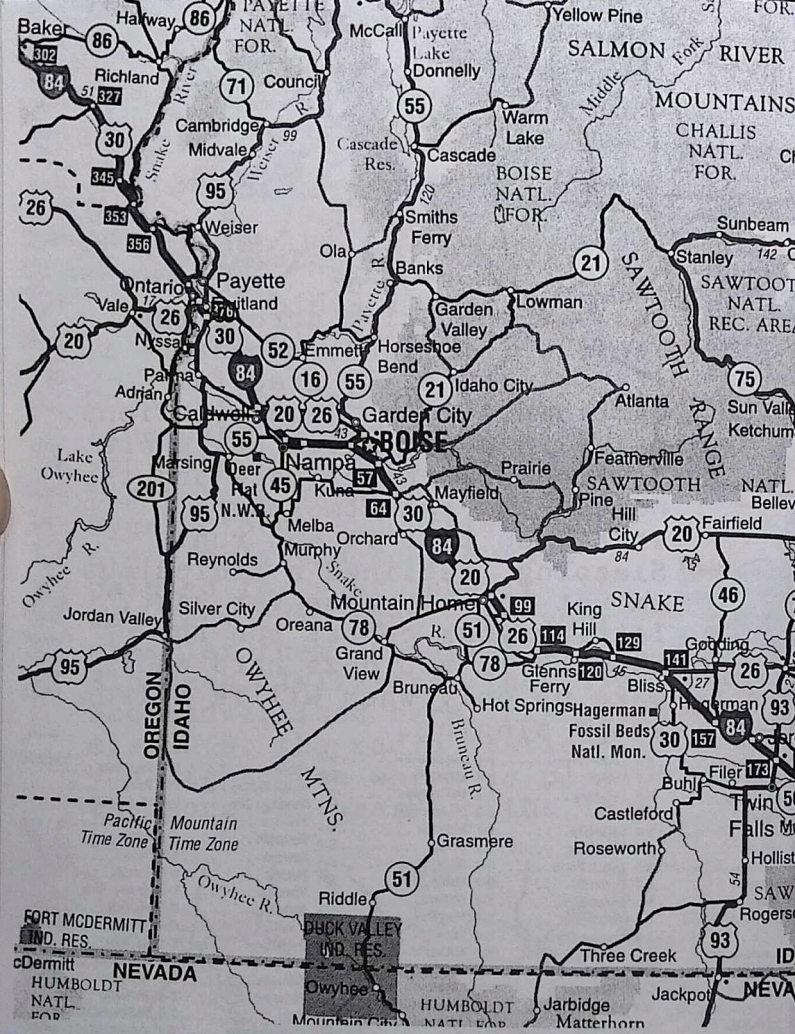


Things I Love
long-distance driving

Going, ever, moving, the yellow line dipping and dashing behind you. The blur that fences and trees make when you let your eyes unfocus and pretend they are simply enormous murals painted for your benefit. The way they come back when your eyes let them. Roadside stops. Slurpees. Twizzlers. Taco Time. Neon-advertised bars. Mix tapes, mix CD's, the radio station you light upon which is playing the song you heard in the last state.

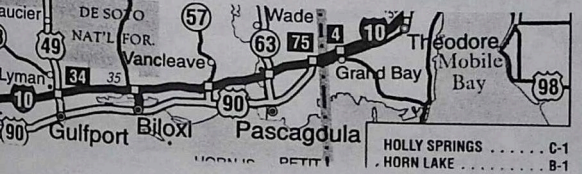
The way you drive across the land, on the land, submerged to its twists, hill, graceful dartings, cracks, constructions. Being in a big metal box where you control the climate and the noises and the atmosphere, where you take it and run. Sleeping, reclined a ridiculous amount in the passenger seat, letting your cohort run the show while you doze hard and wake up only when Willie Nelson stops singing.

ansville	A-3	Lawrenceville	B-2	Marshallville	B-3	Moultrie	C-5	Pembroke	
er	C-1	Leary	B-4	Maysville	C-2	Mount Vernon	C-4	Perry	
erville	D-5	Leesburg	B-4	McCaysville	B-1	Mountain City	C-1	Pine Mountain	
chton	B-2	Lenox	C-5	McDonough	B-2	Nahunta	D-5	Pineview	
	B-4	Lexington	C-2	McIntyre	C-3	Nashville	C-5	Plains	
nton	C-3	Lincolnton	D-2	McRae	C-4	Newnan	A-3	Pooler	
son	B-3	Locust Grove	B-3	Meigs	B-5	Newton	B-5	Portal	
er	B-1	Louisville	D-3	Menlo	A-1	Nicholls	D-4	Powder Srgs.	
rson	C-2	Ludowici	E-4	Metter	D-3	Nicholson	C-2	Preston	
rsonville	C-3	Lula	C-1	Midville	D-3	Ocilla	C-4	Quitman	
	D-4	Lumber City	C-4	Midway	E-4	Oglethorpe	B-4	Ray City	
sboro	B-2	Lumpkin	A-4	Milan	C-4	Omega	C-5	Reidsville	
esaw	A-2	Luthersville	B-3	Milledgeville	C-3	Palmetto	A-2	Riceboro	
land	D-5	Lyons	D-4	Millen	D-3	Patterson	D-5	Richland	
yette	A-1	Mableton	A-2	Monroe	C-2	Pavo	C-5	Richmond Hill	
ange	A-3	Macon	B-3	Monticello	C-3				

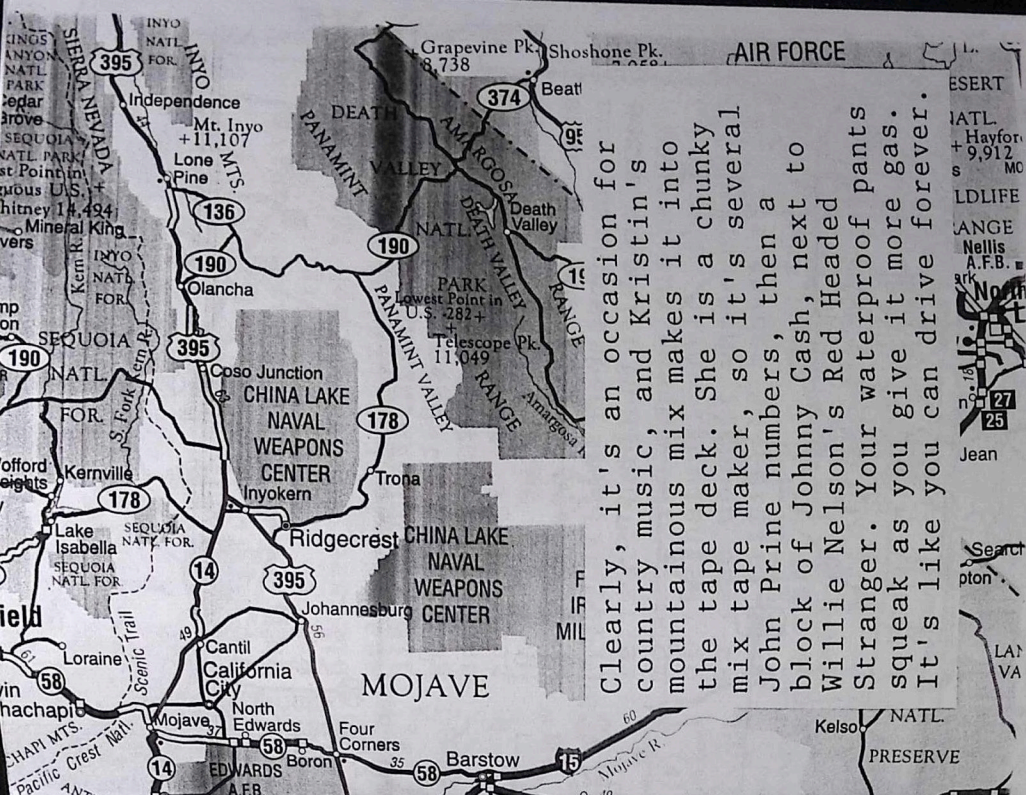

Baker
Halfway
PAYETTE NATL. FOR.
McCall
Payette Lake
Donnelly
Yellow Pine
SALMON
RIVER
FOR.
Richland
Council
Cambridge
Midvale
Weiser
Cascade Res.
Cascade
Warm Lake
Middle Fork
MOUNTAINS
CHALLIS NATL. FOR.
BOISE NATL. FOR.
Smiths Ferry
Sunbeam
Ola
Banks
Stanley
SAWTOOTH
SAWTOOTH NATL. REC. AREA
Payette R.
Ontario
Payette
Fruitland
Vale
Garden Valley
Lowman
Nyssa
Emmett
Horseshoe Bend
Parma
Adrian
Idaho City
Atlanta
Sun Valley
Ketchum
Caldwell
Garden City
BOISE
Lake Owyhee
Marsing
Deer Flat
Nampa
Kuna
Prairie
Featherville
SAWTOOTH NATL.
Mayfield
Pine
Hill City
Bellev
N.W.R.
Melba
Orchard
Fairfield
Reynolds
Murphy
Snake R.
Owyhee R.
Mountain Home
King Hill
SNAKE
Jordan Valley
Silver City
Oreana
Grand View
Glenns Ferry
Bliss
Gooding
Hagerman
Hot Springs
Fossil Beds Natl. Mon.
OREGON
IDAHO
OWYHEE
MTNS.
Bruneau
Bruneau R.
Filer
Buhl
Twin Falls
Castleford
Roseworth
Pacific Time Zone
Mountain Time Zone
Grasmere
Hollist
Rogers
Riddle
FORT MCDERMITT IND. RES.
DUCK VALLEY IND. RES.
Three Creek
Jackpot
McDermitt
NEVADA
HUMBOLDT NATL. FOR.
Owyhee
Jarbidge
Matterhorn
Mountain City

Rainier

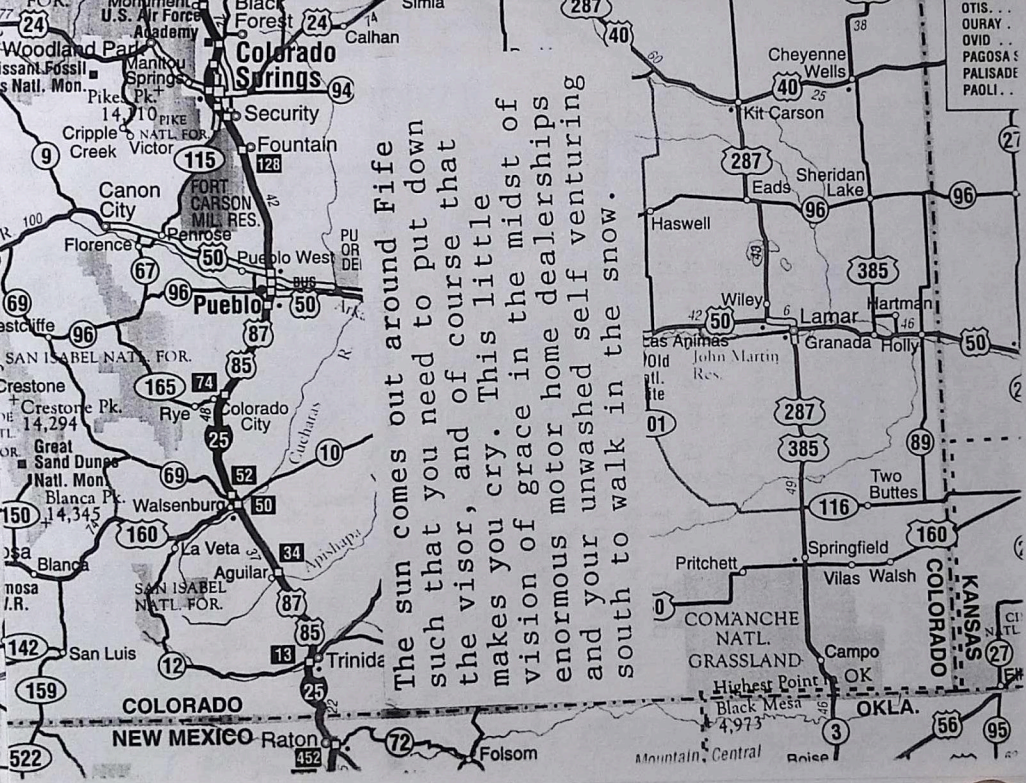
This is the day that the Lord has made for you to wake up so early, after a desperate 3 am fight where you were clearly in the wrong and even more so because you kept falling asleep during the 'discussion.' You lay there and think the pros and cons, the wanting to be in bed, the wanting to be out there. You are clearly not sleeping, making bed less necessary, and finally you put your feet on the floor and then into liner and wool socks.



Your true love is sleeping on the most comfortable futon in the world, gathering space and a few hours of sleep after your monster fight. You kiss his sweet forehead, you cry a little for all the times you have fucked him over again and again. You get your snowshoes, make a peanut butter sandwich, check the weather forecast again. You get in your car and head up Cherry, defrosting as you drive, swilling coffee from the religiously themed mug your mother passed on to you.



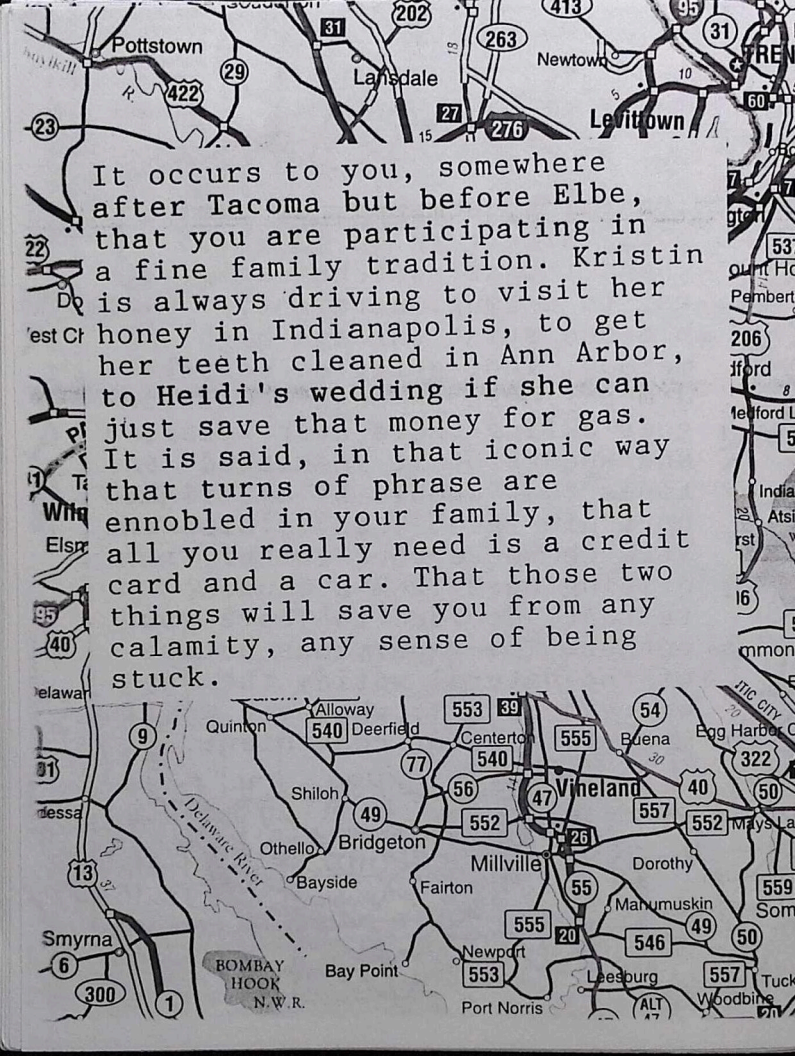
Clearly, it's an occasion for country music, and Kristin's mountainous mix makes it into the tape deck. She is a chunky mix tape maker, so it's several John Prine numbers, then a block of Johnny Cash, next to Willie Nelson's Red Headed Stranger. Your waterproof pants squeak as you give it more gas. It's like you can drive forever.



The sun comes out around Fife such that you need to put down the visor, and of course that makes you cry. This little vision of grace in the midst of enormous motor home dealerships and your unwashed self venturing south to walk in the snow.

You think, somehow, of that particular turn on Idaho 55 where forest switchbacks give way to a long, straight, blessed stint through high meadow. Your grizzled coworker Jim has been through McCall, goes skiing there every year, and speaks of it in hushed tones that should by all rights hurt his face. This is also the stretch where your father, driving back from a church retreat, decided to leave your mother. The impervious nature of the natural world, the way we read upon it whatever we find most fitting or convenient.

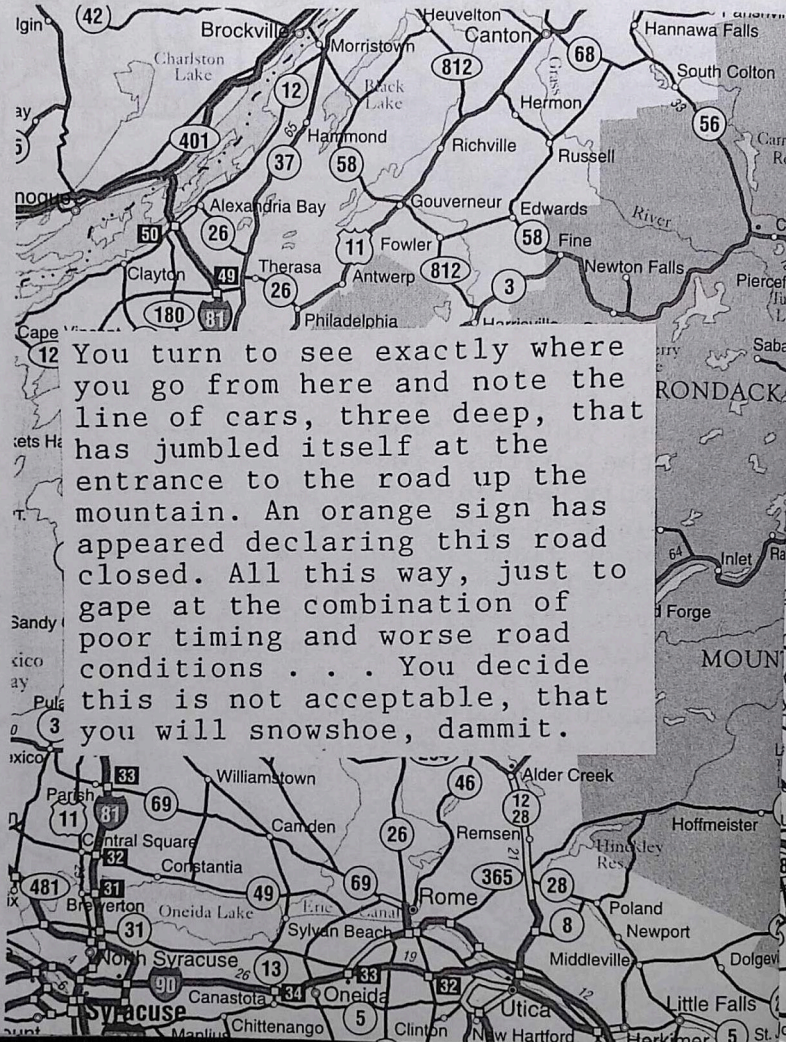
It occurs to you, somewhere after Tacoma but before Elbe, that you are participating in a fine family tradition. Kristin is always driving to visit her honey in Indianapolis, to get her teeth cleaned in Ann Arbor, to Heidi's wedding if she can just save that money for gas. It is said, in in that iconic way that turns of phrase are ennobled in your family, that all you really need is a credit card and a car. That those two things will save you from any calamity, any sense of being stuck.



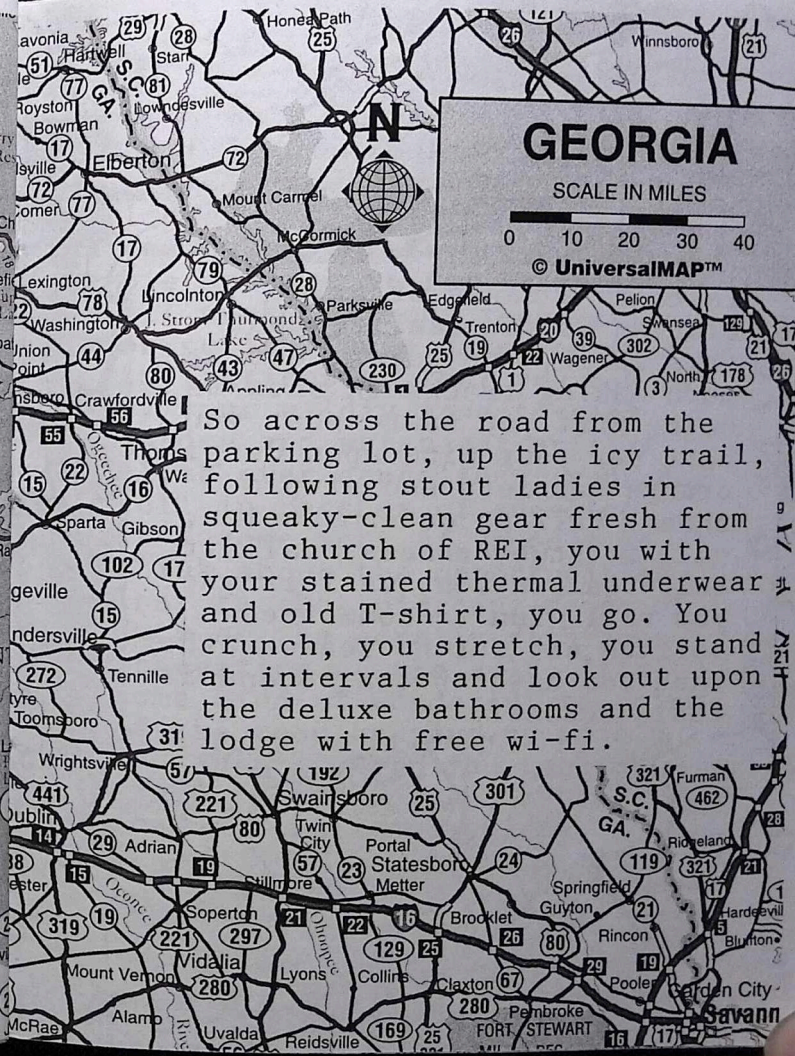
You drive, you drive. The coffee is long gone and your spirits slump a little as you notice the dirty, sanded snow cliffs now looming along the side of the two-laner, a leftover notion from your mother who is terrified of the combination of snow and cars. You speak with the nice lady at the Rainier National Park booth. She is keen to let you know that chains are required above Paradise, and that several cars have slid off today and to be careful.

Your stomach cramps briefly at the thought of chains. Sure, they're in the back of your car. You have put them on exactly once, on the side of Highway 90, with Kristin, when you became convinced that all the other drivers with rattling tires had the right idea. The instructions were inexplicable at best, and the noise just this side of crazy-making. You wonder a bit at this whole venture.

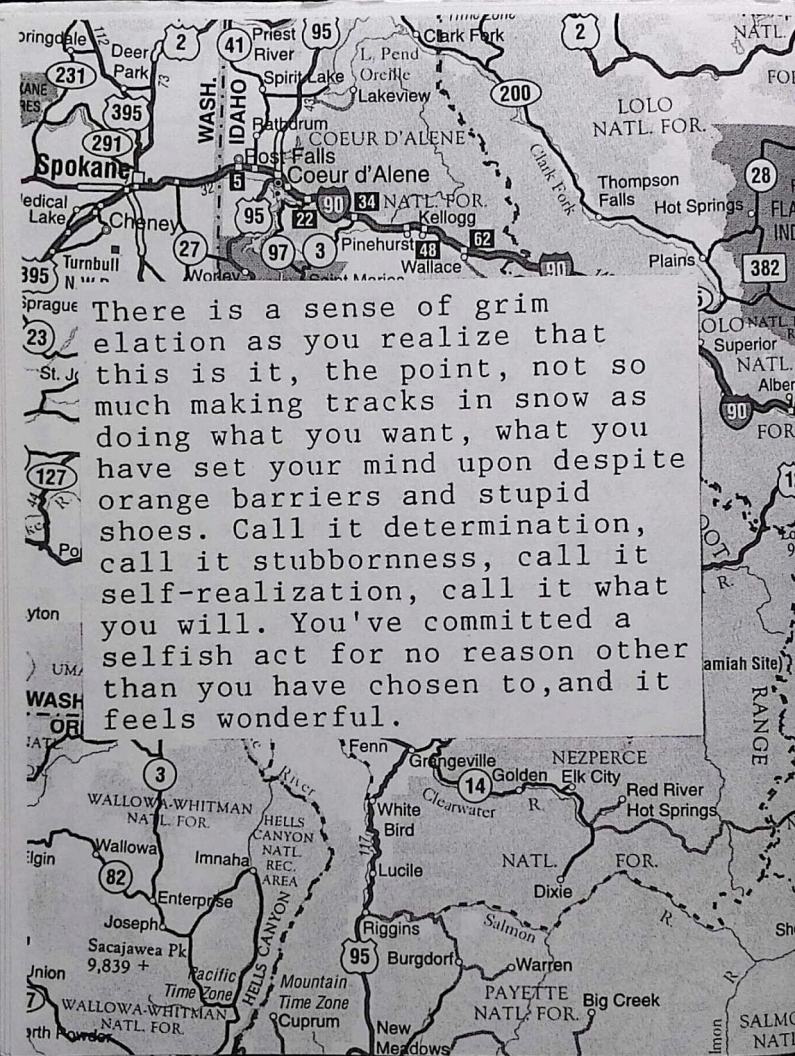
Still, you keep driving, tottering along at National Park speeds, until you reach the parking lot at Paradise. It's filled with families and men with hip packs of camera gear and young women wearing illogical, insensible shoes. So this is nature, you reflect as you park the car and dig out the chains. This way in--no, this way out, lay the chains just so, drive a few inches, hook them up and over. You can barely check your oil level, yet here you have enabled your car to drive up a mountain where, by all rights, only stout hoofed animals should tread. The feeling is one of success, but a superfluous sort.



You turn to see exactly where you go from here and note the line of cars, three deep, that has jumbled itself at the entrance to the road up the mountain. An orange sign has appeared declaring this road closed. All this way, just to gape at the combination of poor timing and worse road conditions . . . You decide this is not acceptable, that you will snowshoe, dammit.

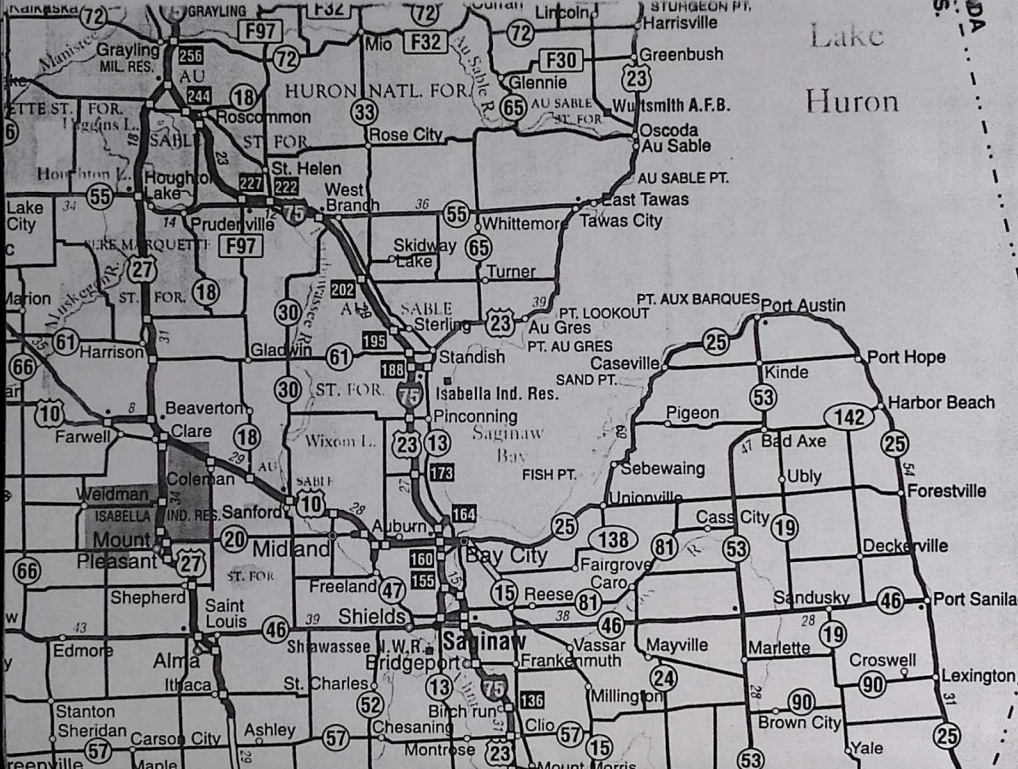


So across the road from the parking lot, up the icy trail, following stout ladies in squeaky-clean gear fresh from the church of REI, you with your stained thermal underwear and old T-shirt, you go. You crunch, you stretch, you stand at intervals and look out upon the deluxe bathrooms and the lodge with free wi-fi.



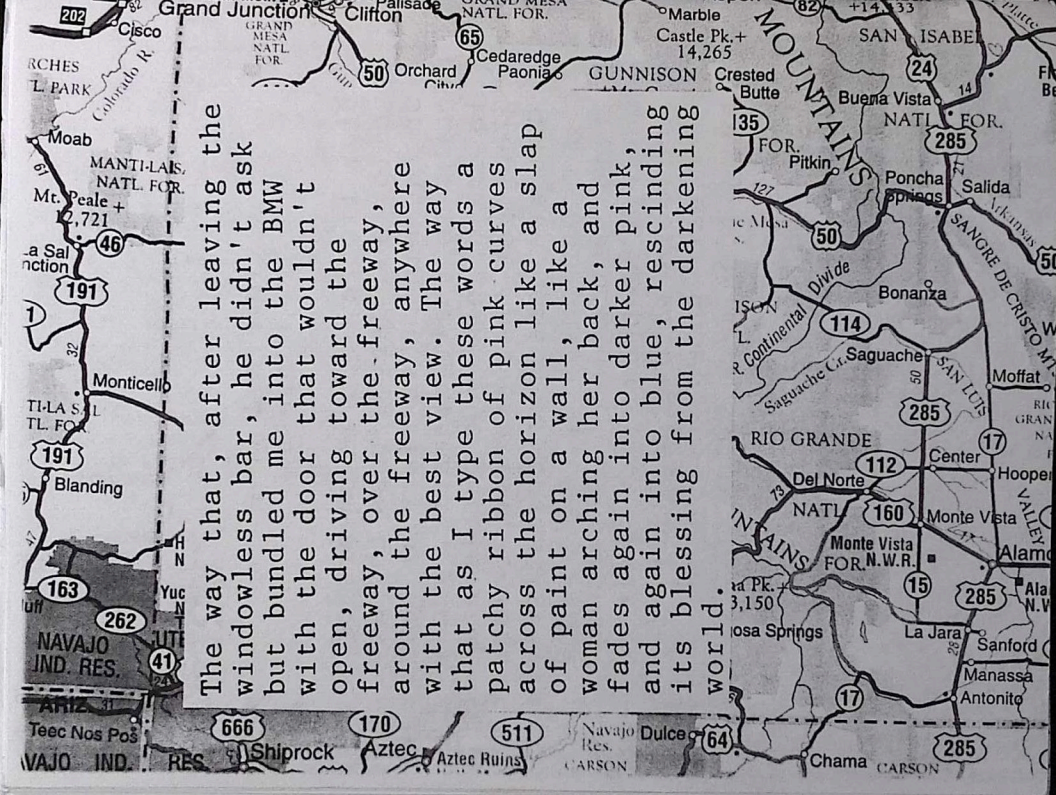
There is a sense of grim elation as you realize that this is it, the point, not so much making tracks in snow as doing what you want, what you have set your mind upon despite orange barriers and stupid shoes. Call it determination, call it stubbornness, call it self-realization, call it what you will. You've committed a selfish act for no reason other than you have chosen to,and it feels wonderful.

It's only now, a year and a half later, that you let this sink in and permeate your loosely woven life. These days you bake your favorite kind of pie and eat it for breakfast, all week, without reservation or guilt. These days you decline invitations so that you can sit by your wildly gone-to-seed garden and watch butterflies climb over dandelions, your dog roll in patches of sunshine. It's some sort of sadness to think about the opportunities lost to that piercing sense of duty or the morally righteous starvation of the self. It's some kind of wonderful to think of the road opening up within and out, calling you to trek, stomp, shake a move, because you love to, because you can.

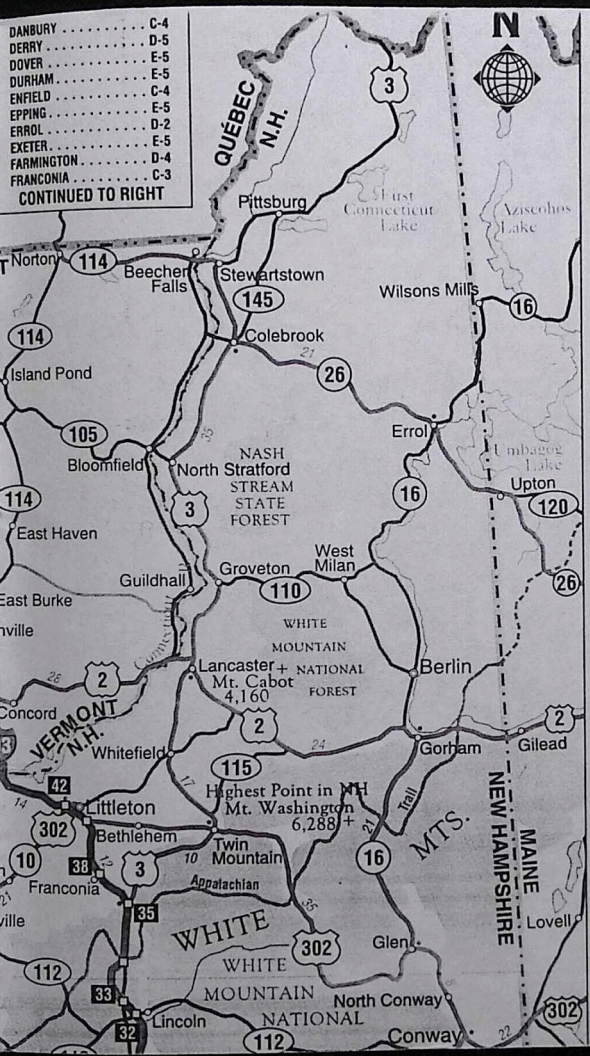

Lake Huron
Grayling
GRAYLING
MIL. RES.
HURON NATL. FOR.
Roscommon
Houghton Lake
Prudenville
St. Helen
West Branch
Rose City
Mio
Lincoln
STURGEON PT.
Harrisville
Greenbush
Glennie
AU SABLE ST. FOR.
Wurtsmith A.F.B.
Oscoda
Au Sable
AU SABLE PT.
East Tawas
Tawas City
Whittemore
Skidway Lake
Turner
PT. AUX BARQUES
Port Austin
PT. LOOKOUT
Au Gres
PT. AU GRES
Sterling
Standish
Isabella Ind. Res.
Pinconning
Saginaw Bay
Caseville
SAND PT.
Port Hope
Kinde
Harbor Beach
Pigeon
Bad Axe
Ubly
Forestville
Sebewaing
FISH PT.
Unionville
Cass City
Deckerville
Bay City
Fairgrove
Caro
Reese
Sandusky
Port Sanilac
Saginaw
Vassar
Frankenmuth
Mayville
Marlette
Croswell
Lexington
Millington
Brown City
Yale
Clio
Birch run
Chesaning
Montrose
Mount Morris
Shiawassee N.W.R.
Bridgeport
St. Charles
Ithaca
Alma
Edmore
Shepherd
Saint Louis
Shields
Freeland
Midland
Mount Pleasant
ISABELLA IND. RES.
Weidman
Coleman
Sanford
Auburn
Farwell
Clare
Beaverton
Harrison
Gladwin
Wixom L.
Houghton L.
Maple
Ashley
Carson City
Stanton
Sheridan
Greenville
Lake City
Marion
Manistee
Au Sable R.
Tittabawassee R.
Muskegon R.
Pere Marquette
Tobacco R.
Cass R.
Flint R.
Saginaw R.
Kawkawlin R.
Pigeon R.
Pinconning R.
Kawkakee
Lake Huron
U.S. CANADA

Things I Love
sunsets

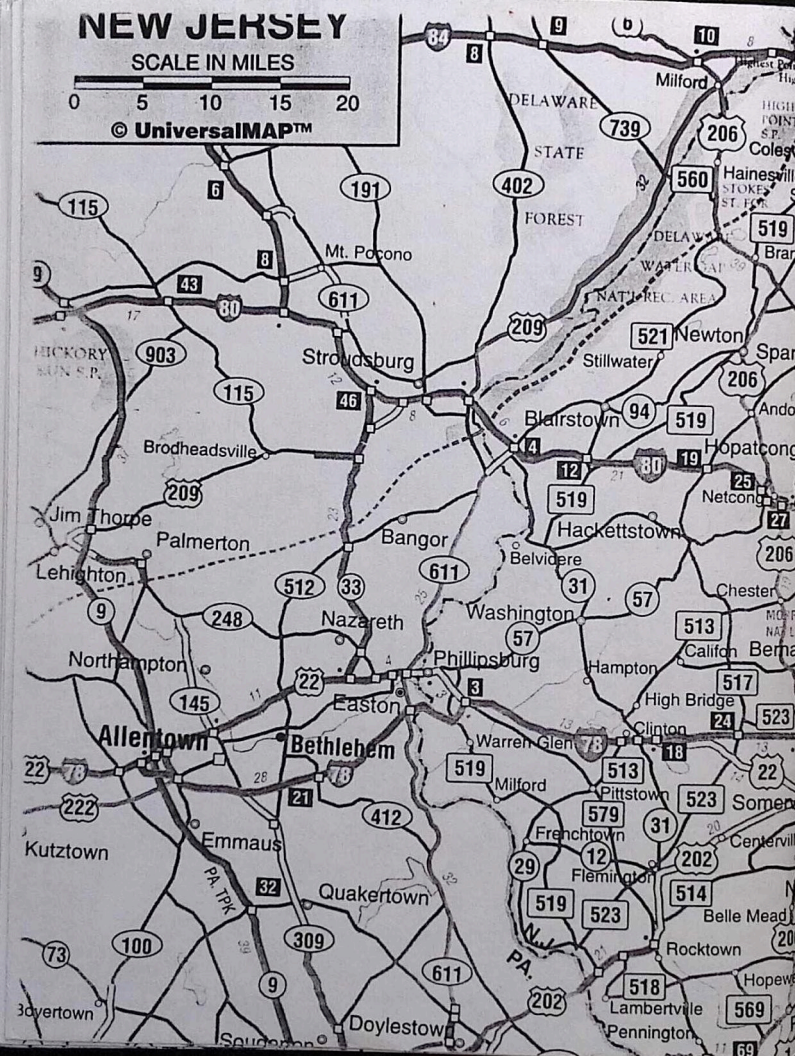
Big, little, subtle smears of yellow and grey across the sky. Or the kind that rip your heart out with their dramatic, gaudy layers of pink and purple and blue, not that exactly, colors that are more than themselves, more than anything, made bigger than the biggest billboard or movie star because of their contrasts with each other. I have been known to stop everything I am doing to crane my head, run outside, focus on the transient loveliness that worms its way deep into me and fills me, deeply, solidly.



The way that, after leaving the windowless bar, he didn't ask but bundled me into the BMW with the door that wouldn't open, driving toward the freeway, over the freeway, around the freeway, anywhere with the best view. The way that as I type these words a patchy ribbon of pink curves across the horizon like a slap of paint on a wall, like a woman arching her back, and fades again into darker pink, and again into blue, rescinding its blessing from the darkening world.



FRANKLIN	C
GEORGES MILLS	C
GILSUM	C
GLEN	C
GOFFSTOWN	D
GORHAM	D
GOSHEN	C
GRAFTON	C
GRANTHAM	C
GREENVILLE	C
GROVETON	D
HAMPTON	E
HANOVER	C
HENNIKER	C
HILLSBORO	C
HINSDALE	B
HOOKSETT	D
HOPKINTON	C
HUDSON	D
JAFFREY	C
KEENE	C
KINGSTON	D
LACONIA	D
LANCASTER	D
LEBANON	C
LINCOLN	D
LISBON	C
LITTLETON	C
LONDONDERRY	D
LYME	C
MANCHESTER	D
MARLBOROUGH	C
MEREDITH	D
MERRIMACK	D
MILFORD	D
MILTON	E
MOULTONBOROUGH	D
NASHUA	D
NEW BOSTON	D
NEW HAMPTON	D
NEWMARKET	E
NEWPORT	C
NORTH CONWAY	D
NORTH STRATFORD	D
NORTH SUTTON	C
NORTHFIELD	D
NORTHWOOD	D
OSSIPEE	D
PETERBOROUGH	C
PINARDVILLE	D
PITTSBURG	D
PITTSFIELD	D
PLAINFIELD	C
PLAISTOW	D
PLYMOUTH	C
PORTSMOUTH	E
RAYMOND	D
ROCHESTER	D
ROLLINSFORD	E
RYE BEACH	E
SALEM	D
SANBORNVILLE	D
SOMERSWORTH	D


NEW JERSEY
SCALE IN MILES
0 5 10 15 20
© UniversalMAP™
Milford
DELAWARE
STATE
FOREST
Mt. Pocono
Stroudsburg
Brodheadsville
Jim Thorpe
Palmerton
Lehighton
Bangor
Nazareth
Northampton
Easton
Allentown
Bethlehem
Emmaus
Kutztown
Quakertown
Doylestown
Blairstown
Stillwater
Newton
Hackettstown
Belvidere
Washington
Phillipsburg
Hampton
High Bridge
Clinton
Warren Glen
Milford
Pittstown
Frenchtown
Flemington
Rocktown
Lambertville
Pennington
Belle Mead
Netcong
Hopatcong
Chester
Califon
Hopewell
Doylestown
PA. TPK
N.J.
PA.